



Singing every Thursday at 7:00 PM, Community United Methodist Church of Olathe



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February 2012  
 Vol. 28 Number 3

# Singing for a Church Valentine Dinner

Preparation is the shortest path to success or something like that. But preparation certainly did make our singout at the Montrose United Methodist Church fun ... And very successful. The guys paid attention to the director, which made MaryAnn smile. Which made the guys smile, which made the audience smile. What a concept.

Barny, the guy responsible for getting the gig in the first place did his usual goofy and funny job as our M.C., a task he seems to revel in. All songs chosen were songs most guys know pretty well, and those who don't, learned them.

Fourmata had the opportunity (all members at the same place at the same time) to sing a song as well.

Thanks to Carol and MaryAnn, the men-in-black were presented a splash of RED to identify them with Valentines. The RED was a very nice red carnation,

carefully pinned to the black shirt. I'm sure we presented a very romantic aura as we sang. Maybe.

As an aside, Fourmata figured they had another opportunity, that is to sing a couple of songs at the horsefly Brewery prior to the Church thing as a way to call attention to Singing Valentines. So they did. But, none of them had a poster, or any information how a Singing Valentine could be purchased. No phone number, nothing. As it turned out, it didn't matter. The joint was packed, wall to wall. Conversations were loud, in fact so loud that even when Fourmata sang at top volume, only a few folks within 3 feet actually acknowledge the sounds. Oh well, it was worth a beer and getting hoarse. Then on to the Church where singing was to a very polite and attentive audience. Of course they all were captured and either waiting for dinner ... or full. No matter, it was a very enjoyable evening.



The Train Wreck Quartet spicing up a nursing home on Valentine's Day.

If love is blind,  
 why is lingerie so  
 popular?

# SINGING VALENTINES

## Fourmata sings

Corso showed up at Gary's house wearing a tailored black suit with a white shirt and a red bow-tie. Sam drove in from Rifle dressed about the same, but with a black leather jacket. Sutton showed up dressed as Sam. Gary, didn't. He didn't have a black jacket. What to do? Since necessity is the mother of invention, Gary suggested stopping at the Salvation Army on the way to our first engagement, which we did. 5 minutes later Gary walked out the door wearing a very nice black suit coat with matching pants under his arm. Now this was not expected as Gary is about 6'-5" and finding a black jacket his size at the Salvation Army seemed pretty far fetched. But KARMA took over and after spending 5 minutes and \$10 (Gary's) we were all dressed alike. That first success pretty much summed up how the rest of the day would go.

Yes, it was a good day. It was an emotional day. But it was happy. We met and sang to some of the nicest folks ever, and sang to some of the nicest folks we already knew.

First, we sang to a lovely couple and their daughter. Tears happened, and we joined in the snuffling. At another stop, we were treated with homemade raspberry muffins and iced tea and some good conversation. At another, we sang to a beautician teacher as she taught her class of young women. Yes, she cried. And, as scripted, her husband walked in as we sang. Excellent.

A highlight (they all were) was a nice sing and visit with a very special lady, Helen Morgan, aged 96. Helen is somewhat of a legend in Delta County as she wrote **"Looking back on Delta County : Remnants of the Old West"** in 1976. That book is still available and should be read by every local resident. As we were leaving, Hank Lohmeyer, a well-know reporter for the Delta County Independent, showed up to take some pictures and get information for an upcoming article in the paper.

As we were leaving the Morgan compound, we were asked to sing for a small group of musicians rehearsing in a cowboy church. We sang "I'll Fly Away" and garnered a

standing invitation to appear on their Saturday shows. Hopefully we can do that.

The day topped off with a singing Valentine to a teacher in Olathe, and her class, and then a nice visit with the Mother of Singing Valentines. Alice Cooper did all the scheduling, the preparations, and the clever attachments to the silk roses for several years at the very beginning of Singing Valentines. We shared many wonderful memories with her. Some of you may remember Wayne, her husband, who was one of our cherished members for many years. Alice reminded us that she is now 86 and doing well. We agree, she is doing great.

It was a short day, but a good day. Sam left immediately to drive to Denver to catch a plane to Mazatlan. Corso said he had some duties that required his attention, and Wilson promised to fix dinner for his lovely wife. So we went home, puffed up with a very successful day.

# Splinters from the Board

CANYON CHORDS is the official monthly publication of the Black Canyon Barbershop Chorus known as the Montrose, Colorado, chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society. Opinions stated in this bulletin are not necessarily those of the Chapter, the Editor, or possibly even the stated author.

2012 CHAPTER OFFICERS  
(Term expires 12/31 in year shown after office)

- PRESIDENT (2013)  
Larry Wilkinson
- IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT  
Larry Wilkinson
- SECRETARY (2012)  
Chuck Frush
- TREASURER (2012)  
Rex Pierson
- PROGRAM VP (2013)  
Larry Cooper
- MEMBERSHIP VP (2012)  
Kevin Cohenour
- PUBLIC RELATIONS VP (2013)  
Dennis Olmstead
- MUSIC VP (2013)  
David Stannard
- PUBLICATIONS VP (???)  
Bill Sutton
- MUSIC COMMITTEE  
Open
- CHAPTER HISTORIAN (appointed)  
Tom Chamberlain
- MEMBERS-AT-LARGE (1 yr terms)  
Bob Brethouwer  
Tim Davis  
Del Dyck  
John Taylor
- MUSICAL DIRECTOR:  
MaryAnn Rathburn  
Tom Chamberlain, Emeritus
- ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER  
Carol Morrell
- SERGEANT OF ARMS  
Bob Brethouwer
- SUNSHINE GUY (appointed)  
Rex Pierson

Prez Larry called a special planning meeting for January 28 to try to figure out what we would do the rest of the year. Most of the elected board met at 10 AM in the board room of Timberline Bank. Classy place to meet, thanks to VP Rex. Larry, courtesy of wife Sally, furnished yummy muffins for those who didn't eat breakfast or didn't need any more. What could be better than a great muffin covered with butter and a cup of real coffee to start the late morning on a Saturday. Several topics were cussed and discussed and massaged and manipulated until the effort was overshadowed by boredom, frustration, exasperation, or maybe hunger pangs for some protein. Probably all.

A survey completed by most members indicated some pretty good information to help Program VP Cooper plan the after-show year. Lots of good comments to be considered and good feed-back about possible singout locations. As an example, a singout at the Chapel of the Cross scored much higher than a singout at the Black Canyon NP. It doesn't mean we should NOT go to the Black Canyon, it means that priorities can be set. Lots of reasons were theorized to explain the results, but they were indicative of general group preferences. More talk about the preparation, or lack of, for the upcoming April Show. The use of a possible survey to assess how each member views their individual progress met some support, some opposition, and some sarcasm.

Tim suggested we consider having a pre-show in Delta. Good idea, but no follow up.

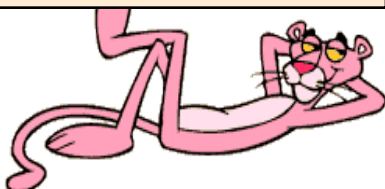
Carol showed us a white tie she found on the internet for about \$7 and a hanky square for \$4. Shipping cost is up in the air. After some tossing about possibilities, it was kind of agreed that Carol would order the ties and hankies, the chapter would pay for them, and they would be offered to all members on an 'option to pay' program. Every member who will be on our show will have a white tie and hanky. If they choose to reimburse the chapter, it is their personal decision. As far as I know (and hope) no records of who pays and who doesn't will be kept. If intimidation by keeping records is done, it is not a good program.

Rex pointed out that the chapter fiscal balance is continuing to decline so possible fund raising methods were on the table for 15 to 20 minutes. Dr. Bob sort of offered his daughter-in-law Robyn to write some grant request letters. Does Robyn know? Not yet, but Bob is sure she will do it.

Prez Larry told us he had confirmed dates with DMEA for the all day practice session and the John Coffin session. Check our website calendar for more information.

Good session, good conversation, good ideas.

Next board meeting will be on February 21.



Don't take yourself so seriously. No one else does

If a cow laughed, would milk come out of her nose?

# Big Fun up the Big Thompson:

By Gary Wilson

Rocky Mountain Harmony College was a great experience except for the blizzard on the eastern slope. I was able to make it somehow despite half the registered barbershoppers couldn't or didn't make it because of the storm and cancelled flights. Top dogs in the district hierarchy were there however to provide great workshops, late night tags, quartet coaching, everyman chorus rehearsals, and singing on stage with Storm Front and nine or ten other quality district quartets. The food was pretty good too, all you could eat. Accommodations at the YMCA complex three miles up in the beautiful mountains exceeded my expectations, comfy rooms with everything conveniently located close by. First night was chow, chorus rehearsal, and tags pick up quartetting. Vern and Dave Stannard put together a pick up quartet for the afterglow with Bill Biffle and James Estes (check your Harmonizer), while I found opportunities to sing with Lee Taylor (prez), Tony Pranaitis, Rod Sgrignoli. John Coffin, Dr. Dan Clark amongst others. Saturday was workshops and three more everyman rehearsals to sing a couple songs on the show and the show to be headlined by Storm Front. Darin Drown was recovering from vocal cord damage. So, two of his ex students who sing in Sound of the Rockies as well as with the 52 eighty youth group filled in superbly for him on some of their tough songs. Jeff the tenor forgot his trombone mouth piece so he did the vocal version of trombone while the other three played trumpet. They pulled it off amazingly. A lesson learned in overcoming adversity when things don't quite go as planned. Relax and don't sweat the little things was some of the advice Jim Clark from Storm Front gave us in the presentation workshop. He practiced what he preached that night. Too many other pointers to mention here. The beginning director's workshop gave me a whole new appreciation for what Mary Ann does for us every week. I'll have to go back and attend some of the other great workshops next year since we had to pick and choose from all the possibilities. Not much down time until we all kicked back at the afterglow at a local restaurant with libations. Needless to say we sang until they kicked us out. Got up the next day to dry roads and sunny skies. Fitting end to a great time. I highly recommend it... Yours in harmony, Gary



Larry Cooper	Feb 15
Chuck Frush	March 2
Lee Ervin	March 12

*We don't stop singing because we get old,  
we get old because we stop singing.*

*No one is in charge of  
your happiness but  
you*



## Chapter Quartets

**FOURMATA**

Contact: Bill Sutton 874-9280

**If it's true that we are here to help others, then what exactly are the others here for?**

If all the world is a stage,  
where is the audience sitting?

If 4 out of 5 people SUFFER from diarrhea .....  
does that mean that one out of five enjoys it ?

# Three concerts, three observations

*Lessons to learn or at least be  
considered*

For some strange reason Sallie and I attended three concerts in the past few days. Each was different in the type of music, the blend of audience attendees, and audience reaction.

On Saturday night we attended a Blue Grass festival program at Pea Green. It was packed, standing room only. In fact, even the most lenient Fire Marshall would have blushed. As you imagine, the crowd was younger and rural in demeanor. There were ranchers, farmers, bankers, doctors and merchants. It was a semi-rowdy crowd, a bunch bent on having a good time. A pot luck overflowing with food was included in the \$5 admission. It was great, it was fun, and the music never let us down. Three different groups ranged from mediocre local to fairly professional from out of town. Group 1 was OK, but there was little interaction with the audience. Group 2 was better in both categories. Group three won the prize with their talent and their rapport with the rowdy. The group was having fun and it rubbed off on the audience. The audience

interaction with the groups, and vice versa made the evening more than just entertaining, it made the evening special. No one wanted it to end. Everyone was happy. I heard no negative comments.

On Monday night we attended one of the Delta Concert series performances. The audience pushing 400 were far more conservative in their reactions than the Saturday night bunch. The average age, I would presume by the abundance of silver heads observed, was over 60, the kind of group we expect for our shows. The entertainers, billed as "ThreeStyle" was a cabaret trio, two guys on keyboards (one a piano) and a singer gal. All are trained musicians, all with bunches of experience ranging from theater to appearing in large bands. Their talent is above reproach, and their ability to interact with the audience certainly was the icing on a very tasty cake. But when they were done, we were ready to go home. Excellent night, very enjoyable. But enough was enough.

On Tuesday night, after the success of Monday, we decided to attend the Grand Junction offer for the concert series. The write up sounded like it would be the topper of all three. An a cappella British group with typical British lack of sense of humor is billed at VOCES8. Six guys and two gals, thus the 8 part of the name. And they sing, thus the VOICES part. They were a very professional, very polished version of the Montrose group "Dolce Voce" a local group started by a past chorus member and director, JC Marin. I

have to admit that it doesn't take a lot of that type of a cappella singing to make me look at my watch. Comments by a totally packed Grand Junction High School auditorium seating around 800 folks were not the kind of comments we want to hear at our show. Again, the average age seemed to be somewhere above 60 years old. The group was polished to the point they had no personality. They stood like statues between songs as if they were at attention. The moves during singing were well practiced and seem wooden. The attempts of humor were only attempts. Their talent and musical prowess is beyond question, but their ability to interact and entertain was lacking. In fact, we left at the intermission, as did a number of other members of the audience.

So, is there a lesson here? I think so, but it is up to our Show Chairman to do whatever he thinks should be done to present a very entertaining and enjoyable evening. By the way, the most entertaining of the groups did not sink to goofing off. No wise cracks, no silly actions. Their ability to be involved with the audience was natural, not goofy. It is a fine line and if we are to be a successful on stage, we need to find that line. We should not cross it. Perhaps the chosen MC will provide the necessary rapport. But we have to be having a wonderful time presenting. If we are not having a good time, you can be sure the audience is not either.

Life may not be the party we hoped for, but while  
we're here we should dance

# Getting to know our Members better!

*From Rex Pierson*

Since this is Valentine month, how about a little information about our two lovely and talented young ladies our chorus is so fortunate to have. The two (2) of you are our chorus "Valentines" 365 days of the year, --not just Valentine's Day!

## MARYANN RATHBURN

MaryAnn has skillfully and pleasantly directed the Black Canyon Barbershop Chorus for over two years. I feel certain that we can all say that it has been so much fun to have her Directing and imparting her vast knowledge of music and trying to get us to do a "little" interpretation of the song lyrics. She is so passionate, --why can't we get a little of that passion in our song presentation?

MaryAnn is married to Martin (Marty), a fantastic artist and musician. She has 2 grown daughters, Mica and Jade.

MaryAnn is a retired banker (heaven forbid) but now teaches piano and voice. She's NOT really retired. She has lived in this area of Colorado most of her life.

As a couple, Marty and MaryAnn have their own band. MaryAnn plays the piano and sings for the engagements while Marty takes care of the percussion, etc. Marty accompanied us for one of our show songs on our last show. (Carol Morrell is in the band too!).

**Why is it called "after dark" when it really is "after light"?**

Rock hunting, music and reading are at the top of her list of hobbies. I know many of those "rocks" are arrowheads if they have a lucky day hiking the hills and trails.

Thank you MaryAnn for all you do for us....even when we're kind-of unruly!

## CAROL MORRELL

We are so fortunate to have Carol helping manage our chorus. She and MaryAnn have been friends for many years. It's rare for her to ever miss a rehearsal night and she also attends the Board Meetings and planning meetings. She agreed to do the scheduling for the Singing Valentine performances this up-coming Feb. 14<sup>th</sup>, 2012, --a big task!

Carol has a son, Patrick. (I believe he is in the Military, not sure...ask her). We sang a "Happy Birthday" one night when Carol dialed him from practice and had us sing for him. Carol has lived in Western Colorado most of her life.

Her hobbies are: Playing in the band with Marty and MaryAnn. Playing golf and (surprise) shopping! She is a real estate developer/investor, -- when we don't occupy all of her time.

**GOOD CHARACTER:  
Doing the right thing  
when no one is watching!**

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## What Our Director Is Not Going to Do



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Our director is not going to learn my notes and words for me.

Our director is not going to make up for me not selling any ads, show tickets or Singing Valentines.

Our director is not going to make it easier for me to learn choreography.

Our director is not going to instantly transform our chorus and make us contenders on the international stage.

Our director is not going to improve my riser discipline, or that of the men around me.

Our director is not going to make sure my pants and shirt are clean, or that I show up on time for rehearsals, or that I call in when I can't make it.

Our director is not going to bring in dozens of new singers all by herself.

Our director is not going to take over responsibilities from the committees and officers.

So what is our director going to do?

Only so much as we enable her to do, through our own commitment to excellence, our individual willingness to change, our openness to new ideas and our dedication to uniting as One Chorus, speaking with One Voice, acting with One Mind and achieving our One Mission.

## How come abbreviated is such a long word?

He could lead  
the leads if he  
would get the  
lead out.

Why do we say something is out of  
whack?

what is a whack?

When does something have plenty  
of whack?

How will we know?

*“GOD, I LOVE IT.” – At age 89, Wilkinson Library founder Larry Wilkinson still gets out on Telluride’s mountain whenever he can. (Photo by Peter Shelton) At right, Larry and wife Betty posed on July 14, 1986, behind the Telluride stone jail at the groundbreaking for an expansion to what was then Telluride’s library. The Wilkinsons went on to spearhead the bonding and construction of the current, award-winning library building which bears their name.*

## Skiing’s FINE at 89 Our Prez Larry



If you didn’t see this article on the front page of the January 26, 2012, issue of **The Watch**, it is reprinted here for your viewing. We are proud and pleased to have Larry as our President and a member of this wonderful chapter.

*“If it weren’t for skiing I would wilt.”*

BY PETER SHELTON

From the looks of him on skis, Larry Wilkinson isn’t about to wilt any time soon, even though the founder of Telluride’s Wilkinson Public Library will be 90 years old in June.

We took a tour of the mountain together a couple of weeks ago, and on every (groomed) path Wilkinson stood erect on his skis, like a hood ornament – like a man who learned to ski in the leather-boot era, which he did – and steered subtle, round arcs everywhere we went. He cut such an elegant figure, comfortably cruising down See Forever, for example, you’d be unlikely to notice the oxygen tank on his back.

Wilkinson needs a little extra O2 these days, but he makes few other concessions to age. (He did

move down to the relatively rich air of Montrose – from 8,800 feet to 5,800 feet – in 1998, when he was 76.) He has skied Telluride every winter since its opening, in 1972.

Larry and Betty Wilkinson first came to Telluride in 1971 intending to stay just one year. Their three kids had all graduated from college, and a southern California friend had offered the use of an “unwinterized cabin” in town – a town that was half boarded up from the “quiet years” of the 1950s and 60s. Larry did some winterizing, and they never left.

First the skiing part. Larry taught himself to ski on a rope tow at Drumlins, a golf course next door to Syracuse University.

of upstate New York.) Then, “Eventually I graduated to skiing at White Face,” the alpine hill at Lake Placid.

He attended Wesleyan University in his birth state of Connecticut, and when the war came he enlisted in the precursor to the Air Force, the Army Air Corps. “I knew about the 10th Mountain Division,” he said, somewhat wistfully, which was training in Colorado in the early 1940s. “As a skier, I kicked myself” for not signing up with the mountain troops. “But then again, I’m still here.” (The 10th, which saw bloody action in Italy, suffered the highest casualty rate per combat day of any U.S. division in World War II.)

With the peace, the Wilkinsons settled in southern California, where Larry did development work for an architectural firm that specialized in amphitheaters and gymnasiums and other large public projects. And he skied the close-by San Gabriel Mountains, particularly Mt. Waterman in the Wrightwood area.

Then came the Telluride offer and, Larry said, “We realized there was nothing keeping us in southern California.”

“Betty couldn’t live without a library.” That’s the way Larry explains the genesis of their long involvement with libraries in their new home. (At the time, Telluride was visited once a week by a bookmobile.) “So, we started the first library, in the Quonset Hut, in 1973. We formed a nonprofit, Telluride Community Library, Inc. Betty was the librarian, and I built some shelves in one end” of what was then the all-purpose gym. Donations and late fees paid for the coal-fired heat.

The library needed to expand almost immediately. The Wilkinsons made a deal with the town for the old Telluride stone jail, across Spruce Street from The Senate bar. A countywide vote established the San Miguel County Public Library District No. 1, with 1.5 mills to renovate the tumbledown building. "That bond issue passed handsomely," Wilkinson remembered, unlike the controversial \$2 million bond issue in 1997, which was needed to build the current, 20,000 square-foot facility.

Not that the jailhouse library was easy. Larry and Betty hauled the needed sandstone building rocks, three and four at a time, in their van from down in San Miguel Canyon. Judge Tom Goldsmith helped with the labor pool: Instead of fines for dog-owners who let their hounds roam in town, he ordered them to work off their sentences at the library job site.

The jailhouse library opened in 1976. But even with an expansion in the mid-1980s, it was clear more space was required. The 1997 referendum was so close it went to a recount. And when all the counting and appealing was done, the bond issue had passed by two votes.

The acrimony dissipated, though, and by 2000 when the new space was dedicated, "The lines for the ceremony were down the block," Wilkinson remembered. "The desire is what pushed it."

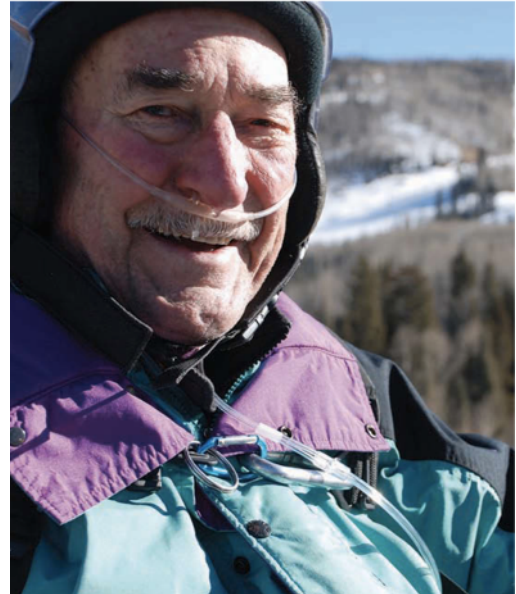
Now the Wilkinson Public Library is a five-star edifice. Literally. The Library Journal Index of Public Library Services has awarded it five stars, the maximum, three years running for its circulation numbers, its programs and program attendance. The WPL is ranked the fifth busiest library in the nation for its size.

At Gorrone Ranch restaurant for lunch (Larry brought nuts and dried apple slices from a friend in Olathe), a parade of old friends stopped by to pay their respects: longtime ski school director Annie Vareille-Savath and her husband Robert, Hotel Columbia developer Jim Lincoln, security guru John Cohen. "For awhile I worked for food services here," Wilkinson said with a sheepish grin. "I was known as the Mayor of Gorrone."

He told me it was "great to ski with somebody." He's outlived most of his old ski partners. (Betty died in 1988. Larry has since remarried, and he's "made a mountain girl out of Sally, but she doesn't ski.") He told me his brother Bob's ashes are strewn along See Forever run. "That's my wish, too," he said. "No tombstone. My name is etched on the library; that's enough for me."

And then as we pushed off for one more run, and he stepped into his first turn, Larry said to no one in particular, "God, I love it."

Contact Peter Shelton at [pskelton@watchnewspapers.com](mailto:pskelton@watchnewspapers.com)



**Just been to the gym. They've got a new machine in. Only used it for half an hour, as I started to feel sick. It's great though. It does everything - KitKats, Mars Bars, Snickers, Potato Crisps, the lot.."**

## Here are a few pertinent 'RULES' for Barbershop singing lifted from the Voice of Rushmore

1. Nothin' beats singing the right notes!
2. If the arranger gives you a chance to breathe, BREATHE!
3. The less time you have to breathe, the better breath you get.
4. If you're listening, you're late.
5. Take the beats out of the music.
6. Always rehearse in performance mode.
7. Right notes, right time, right intonation, right resonance that's all it takes. (The right words help too!)
8. If you're in the right key at the end of the song, blame the leads.
9. If you can't start anywhere in a song, you don't know your music well enough.



**President Larry publicizing Singing Valentines on radio KUBC.**

**Remember—  
practice  
is what we do at  
home. Rehearsal  
is what we do  
together to  
perfect what we  
have practiced so  
we can make  
music together.**

It's not just the words, it's not just the music, it's not just the right hand movement or the proper placement of the foot, it's everything combined. Internalize your music and grasp the full meaning of the story-telling involved to create that wonderful moment in time for our audience when it all seamlessly blends together. Let them be **"wowed"** out of their seats and gasping for breath!

..... *Barbara Elving, Show Chair*

To see the schedule and very latest information, visit our website [www.blackcanyonchorus.org](http://www.blackcanyonchorus.org) and go to the CALENDAR page. It is the only way we can be current.

